NPMC meetings held

The January meetings of the North Pacific Management Council, NPMC, were attended by Japanese, Korean, and Russian representatives that were interested in the groundfish plan for the Bering Sea and Aleutian Island area as proposed by NPMC.

Another serious concern was the lack of significance given to the impact on marine mammals that coastal communities depend upon and the marine mammal act's relationship to the NPMC proposal. The marine mammal commission, the federal agency charged with protecting and assuring that marine mammals will be managed on a optimum sustainable population, informed the NPMC that it had strong concerns with the present proposed ground fish management plan for the Bering Sea and Aleutian areas.

The MMC stated in it's concluding remarks that the commission feels that the plan has not been developed from a ecosystem perspective [as mandated by the Marine Mammal Protection Act. Consequently they are concerned that implementation of the plan, as presently formulated, may result in the depletion of one or more targets, dependent, or associated species. (i.e. Marine Mammals under the protection of the MMC, seals, walrus, sealions, and whales).

David Nanalook, Mayor of Toqiak, voiced the concern of the coastal community of western Alaska. Mr. Nanalook stated, "The coastal communities have a strong subsistence and subsistence-economic relationships with marine mammals of the Bering Sea. Because of this relationship the absence of the Marine Mammal Commission participation in this plan is important. This demonstrates one of the deficencies of this plan, especially considering that the marine mammals in the Bering Sea consume more pollock than the foreign allocation of pollock in the Bering Sea. The relationship of marine mammals and the fish you are allocating should be understood and be a significant part of the management of the Bering Sea. I do not see this."

"And that is one of the great factors we would like

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to see considered." Mr. Nanalook went on to express concern of the absence of representation of indiginous populations north of the claim. "The indigenous populations of Alaska have inter-relationships with these stocks. And with no representation of any indigenous populations north of the chain, this presents a great detriment to the existance of these people."

NPMC vice-chairman, Harold Lockens, in response to the council membership question said, "this is not the perogative of the council, it is the perogative of the Governor and the Secretary of Commerce." Then Mr. Nanalook mentioned the 1977 passage of AFN resolution number 17725 which requested representation north of the chain.

Mr. Lockens asked if this had been passed on to the Governor. David Nanalook replied, " yes, it was transmitted to the Governor and we have had no action. Therefore through the direct bi-partee relationship that the department of commerce has with the indigneous population, we will have to take it up directly with the federal government." Mr. Lockens said, "that you may do, of course."